

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Rural Alaska Community Action Program

**Application ID:** 13AC145940

**Program Name:** Rural Alaska Village Environmental Network

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### Reviewers' Summary Comments:

- (+) The application thoroughly describes the identified needs in the targeted communities, the extent/severity of those needs, and provides timely and relevant data to back up these claims.
- (+) The problems that the project will be addressing are very clear and relate to the specified needs described.
- (+) The applicant cites the reasoning for selecting this population to be served.
- (+) The application provides background on the collaborating organizations, and what specifically they will and will not accomplish with their own staff and volunteers.
- (+) The number of AmeriCorps members and service terms of these Members are clearly stated.
- (+) The RAVEN model is based on both evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions from reputable sources that are applicable to their target population and will have a measurable community impact.
- (+) The applicant describes the impact of the AmeriCorps investment in terms of return on investment (ROI), and how this project can potentially save these communities money.
- (+) The overall impact they expect to see at the end of the three-year grant cycle is stated and the demonstrable impact their program will have on these communities is described in detail.
- (+) The rationale for choosing specific performance measures is carefully explained.
- (+) The applicant provides a clear description of the need for solid waste management systems work in the targeted communities and includes citations from nationally recognized sources that are current and relevant. They describe the current environmental conditions and the ongoing deterioration of the environment that is a result of the introduction of modern living upon rural communities that are unprepared and uneducated about the proper disposal

of solid waste products.

- (+) The applicant describes the current condition of the environment by using statistical data and narrative descriptions. They provide a narrative description that allows a full understanding of the scope of the problems related to contaminated water and soil and the need for the proposed project work in solid waste management education and practices.
- (+) The applicant describes the target community as being economically disadvantaged and includes statistical data related to the rates of unemployment, poverty, and general community economic instability.
- (+) The applicant includes a detailed list of the activities and tasks that the AmeriCorps members will engage in and describes plans to recruit other volunteers, leverage community resources, and build partnerships with business and nonprofit organizations in the target communities.
- (+) The applicant explains that their project utilizes best practice models that have been developed by the federal EPA and the state Tribal Health Consortium. They describe models and provide references for each.
- (+) The applicant describes the use of a standardized measurement tool that they will be using to measure project progress and states that the information gathered is utilized to assess their practices, set new goals, and prepare a final assessment report. Additionally, they state that as an applicant who is re-applying for continued funding, they have already submitted a project end evaluation report to CNCS.
- (+) The applicant has clearly stated the disadvantaged nature of 40% of the Native Alaskan population. This population has a significant level of unemployment, is living in polluted communities which lack solid waste management, and has a high incidence of major health issues.
- (+) The applicant clearly describes the role of Rural Alaska Village Environmental Network (RAVEN) AmeriCorps members to achieve agreed upon solid waste management goals and has specified the responsibilities necessary to support the goal to recruit locally from within the communities Members will serve.
- (+) The applicant provided persuasive information that the agreements between RAVEN AmeriCorps and participating communities, in accord with success in previous similar projects, will result in trained volunteers and will leverage resources to meet goals.
- (+) There is clear, detailed, persuasive evidence with supportive data to show the applicant's needs exist in their community of rural Alaska, especially in more remote areas. The applicant shows that the need is greater in their target population than in other parts of Alaska and other states.
- (+) The applicant provides very detailed documentation from many updated and knowledgeable sources to explain how severe their need is for assistance from AmeriCorps members, including the need to improve their food sources.
- (+) The applicant explains clearly why they chose this population to be served because of their great need for environmental improvement for the safety and health of the population.

- (+) The applicant describes in detail what changes they expect to see which are improved ecosystems and improved good food and health.
- (+) The applicant provides an estimate from previous experience and success to clearly explain how they determined performance goals and targets for the project.
- (+) The demonstrable impact the program will have is described in detail using past information such as land surveys to show how much solid waste was properly managed.
- (-) The applicant does not clearly describe how the program's impact will be reported annually.